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RR RUEHAST RUEHBZ RUEHDH RUEHDU RUEHHM RUEHJO RUEHLN RUEHMA RUEHMR

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1041

INFO RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE

RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE

RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI 0001

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RUEHDU/AMCONSUL DURBAN 1591

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UNCLAS PRETORIA 000185

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR OES/EGC - THOMPSON, AF/S - WALKE, EEB/ESC -

MONOSSON

DEPT PASS EPA/OIA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ENRG ETRD SENV SF KGHG

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA JOINS INTERNATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY AGENCY

REF: STATE 073217 (09)

**¶11.** (U) South Africa became an official member of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) on January 17, 2010. Elevating South Africa from observer country status, President Jacob Zuma authorized Minister of Energy Dipuo Peters to sign the statute enabling South Africa to participate as a full member of IRENA. Minister Peters attended the third session of the organization's preparatory commission in Abu Dhabi on January 17, where IRENA's 2010 work program, staffing, rules and budget were discussed.

**¶12.** (U) On joining IRENA, Minister Peters said, "this is a pioneering development that will enable us to work with other countries to accelerate the introduction of renewable energy and to confront our vexing energy challenges".

**¶13.** (U) Richard Worthington, Climate Change Program Manager at the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in South Africa welcomed the announcement, but also expressed the view that the South African government needed to do much more on renewable energy.

**¶14.** (U) COMMENT: As described in reftel, the United States became a signatory of IRENA on June 29, 2009. Renewable energy is an area of great potential for U.S. - South Africa bilateral cooperation and South Africa's decision to join IRENA is a step in the right direction. END COMMENT.

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